

## Greater Michigan Chapter

### Central Office:

**Metro Detroit Region**  
20300 Civic Center Drive  
Suite 100  
Southfield, MI 48076

248 351 0280 p  
248 351 0417 f

### Regional Offices:

**Central Michigan**  
4604 N. Saginaw Road  
Suite F  
Midland, MI 48640

989 839 9910 p  
989 839 5910 f

**Northern Michigan**  
**Alpena Office**  
100 Woods Circle  
Suite 300  
Alpena, MI 49707

989 356 4087 p  
989 354 7879 f

**Traverse City Office**  
1040 Walnut Street  
Traverse City, MI 49686

231 929 3804 p  
231 929 2766 f

**Upper Peninsula**  
710 Chippewa Square  
Suite 201  
Marquette, MI 49855

906 228 3910 p  
906 228 2455 f

**West Michigan**  
2944 Fuller Avenue, N.E.  
Suite 101  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

616 459 4558 p  
616 459 8874 f



May 12, 2009

Dear Representative:

Re: Executive Order

Please do all that you can to restore cuts made to Alzheimer's programs and services by the Governor's Executive Order. These cuts eliminate funding received from both the Healthy Michigan Fund and from the Mental Health Initiatives for Older Adults lines. These cuts, in turn, will cause the loss of additional community and grant funding leveraged with those state funds. Please save Alzheimer's disease programs and services in the Healthy Michigan Fund and Healthy Initiatives for Older Adult Line Item in the 2009 budget. By cutting these items the state is being short sighted as these cuts will *definitely* cost the state more dollars as many more families will not receive the critical services such as, referral, support, and care services, and therefore will not be able to remain in their own homes and instead require nursing home care sooner than if these cuts were to be reversed. This will certainly stretch the Medicaid budget to a breaking point.

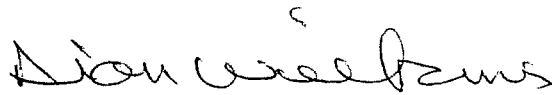
In Michigan, it is estimated there are over 364,800 persons caring for someone with dementia. These caregivers provide an estimated 314,942,511 hours of unpaid care. This representing a total economic value of \$3,332,091,763 in unpaid care here in Michigan, these unpaid caregivers are certainly a pillar holding up our elder care system. While economically indispensable to the state, the personal challenges that at home care presents greatly impacts the health and income of caregivers. We know that research suggests that support for family caregivers delays nursing home placement at a minimum of 4.9 months. At the current rate of Medicaid reimbursement for nursing home care in Michigan, this means a conservative estimate of the savings would be \$23,097 per patient in nursing home costs. With the elimination of state funding for Alzheimer's programs and services, many of these caregivers will be left without support, training, and respite programs that help them delay that nursing home placement.

Last year, the Alzheimer's Association provided education seminars and training to 20,000 early stage patients and caregivers, care consultation for over 4,000 participants, held over 1,600 support group meetings around the state and fielded over 12,000 calls to the information hotline—many of these calls for help and referrals were from people in your district. If out of all the people we assisted, just 25 were helped to stay in their home longer, the State would realize a return on their investment of

approximately \$600,000 funding to the Alzheimer's Association. If 100 people are able to stay in their home for 5 more months then the saving to the state would already be in the millions. Recently released data states there is a new case of Alzheimer's disease every 70 seconds. At that rate, in just 30 minutes, 25 new cases of Alzheimer's occur. Who will care for them and who will pay?

While certainly in these times, every dollar counts, we believe this funding immediately forestalls even greater costs. How is this money best spent? Is it best spent as a drop in the bucket of the budget deficit, or as the means to assist hundreds of families and keep long term care costs down? We deeply appreciate your consideration of our appeal and hope that you will do all in your power to restore this funding. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dian Wilkins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small flourish at the end.

Dian Wilkins, President  
Alzheimer's Association - Greater Michigan Chapter